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EXTERNAL - POLITICAL

1. Year-End Atmosphere. During the week of December 22-28, Soviet news media were engaged, like counterparts elsewhere in the world, in summing up developments in 1961. But aside from the expected projection of ultimate Communist triumphs in all fields of activity in all areas of the world, there were no clear or specific predictions for the new year. In place of this, there were exhortations to the Soviet people, the peoples in the Communist bloc, in the world of the neutral and newly independent countries, and in Western or capitalist countries respectively, as to what they should do to bring about the realization of the events historically predetermined by Marxist-Leninist science.

Much attention was devoted to portrayals of life in America which conveyed an impression of incipient fascism and economic decline. This could be interpreted as an anti-American campaign to build up the Soviet negotiating position on Berlin/Germany and as of the same genre as the timing of the resumption of nuclear tests, the pressure on Finland, and the demand for the extradition of General HEUSINGER. But it also reflected routine defamation of the antipode of the Communist system and a need to offset widening public knowledge of bloc internal difficulties.

2. Bermuda. No clear or strong Soviet reaction to the Bermuda meeting between President KENNEDY and Prime Minister MACMILLAN emerged from Soviet press coverage of this event. The impression was left that there are "reasonable" influencies in the US, and especially in the UK, favoring a Berlin/Germany settlement along lines acceptable to the USSR, but that there are also "aggressive circles", to which the President and Secretary RUSK are presently inclined, which favor sitting tight on Berlin. At the same time, approving press references to Western speculation about another Kennedy-KHRUSHCHEV meeting suggested Soviet interest in US-Soviet bilateral talks at this level as a desirable stage in negotiations on Berlin.

3. Anti-Colonialism. Following the anti-colonialist ballyhoo of the previous week, occasioned by the Indian invasion of Goa, developments in this sector of Soviet propaganda, for the moment at least, seemed to have been conspicuously downgraded in importance. There was little follow-up on Goa, scant coverage of Indonesian threats to seize West Irian by force, stylized treatment of the struggle between American neo-colonialism and the old European colonial powers (no mention of important immediate developments such as the resumption of Belgian-Congolese diplomatic relations), and virtually no reporting at all on Laos and South Vietnam.

4. Soviet-Chinese Relations. Although the shadow of the Soviet-Chinese ideological debate lies over the All-Union Conference on Ideological Work, currently meeting in the Kremlin, there have been no references to China and even only glancing references to Albania in the abbreviated, published accounts of the proceedings. The Chinese Communist Embassy in Moscow confirmed to a Western correspondent that it has reduced its Chinese staff and dismissed 10 Soviet chauffeurs. According to unconfirmed information emanating from non-Communist students at Moscow University, Peiping has instructed 80 percent of the Chinese students currently studying in the USSR to return to China in the near future.

5. Appointment of New Soviet Ambassador to Washington. Although the State Department and Soviet Embassy in Washington announced on December 27 that Anatoly Feodorovich DOBRYNIN has been given an agrement to succeed MENSHIKOV as Soviet Ambassador in Washington, as of December 29, this appointment has not been reported in the Soviet press.

6. UNGA and Chinese Representation. The UN recess for the holiday season was used as an occasion by Izvestiya to print an interview with Soviet Permanent Representative ZORIN summing up the accomplishments of the first part of the 16th UNGA. Zorin obviously was responding to Ambassador STEVENSON's similar summation from the US point of view. Having to some extent accepted the voting on Chinese representation as a measure of success or failure, Zorin turned black into white by claiming that the 16th UNGA revealed a grave erosion of the US position on this issue, foreshadowing the admission of Communist China in 1962. Commenting belatedly on the Chinese representation voting, a Pravda article on December 22 followed the same line. However, the tardiness and colorless arguments of the article suggested that the USSR did not do its best to get the Chinese Communists into the UN.

7. Congo. While the main outlines of the ADOULA-TSHOMBE agreement were factually reported, the reaction of the Soviet press was cautious, mentioning the possibility that Tshombe may renege and that Congolese political circles were wary because the agreement was supported by the US, Britain, France, and Belgium.

Later in the week, Soviet propagandists attempted to explain why the US supported UN military action in the Congo in apparent opposition to its Western allies having a direct interest in the Congo and in Katanga. According to the Soviets, the US aimed to eliminate competitors in the Congo and to subordinate Katanga to the central government thereby strengthening Adoula's hand preparatory to a move to crush GIZENGA. In presenting this argumentation, the Soviet propagandists once again portrayed Gizenga as the true successor of Patrice LUMUMBA and as the leader of the patriotic movement in the Congo. Although this characterization could serve as a justification for support which the Soviets might tender Gizenga in the future, the Adoula Government continued to receive cautious treatment in the press.

8. Guinea. The Embassy has learned through reliable sources that Sekou TOURE has ordered home some 44 Guinean students studying at Moscow University and cut off the stipends which they were receiving from Conakry. Toure's action was apparently taken in retaliation for a letter which the students had sent to the Guinean Ambassador denouncing the Government's policies with respect to Guinean teachers. The Guinean Ambassador has been attempting to send the students home by air since December 14, but without success thus far. In the meantime, Toure also demanded, through his Ambassador here, that the students be denied access to classes and the University. Soviet officials at the University have apparently complied with the request, and the students are now spending most of their time in their dormitories. Guinean students who revealed this information also stated that they are dissatisfied here in Moscow and displeased with what they have seen of the Communist regime. They also indicated that they have encountered racial hostility on occasion on the part of some Soviets.

9. Greece. On December 26, Pravda published a statement made by the Soviet Ambassador to the Greek Foreign Minister, AVEROFF, on the introduction of foreign

nuclear weapons on Greek territory. The statement was characteristic of the type of complaints which the Soviet Union has directed against individual NATO member states for their participation in various aspects of NATO defense planning. The timing of the statement also suggested that the statement was designed to create public pressures against the KARAMANLIS Government and, perhaps, to divert the attention of the Greek Government from Albania.

10. Visits.

India. BREZHNEV's visit to India continues to be given regular attention in the Soviet press.

Guinea. The Soviets announced on December 28 that MIKOYAN, the First Vice Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, would visit Guinea in early January. Since such trips are normally announced well in advance, the supposition is that some urgency is attached to the visit. It is possible that the trip is related to the difficulties which the Soviets are now having with Sekou Toure.

INTERNAL - POLITICAL

11. Ideologists on the Defensive. The All-Union Conference on Questions of Ideological Work opened on December 25 in the Great Kremlin Palace with a brief speech by Khrushchev. Thereafter, the Conference appeared to be wholly in the hands of L. F. ILYICHEV, Chief of the Central Committee Section for Agitation and Propaganda, who was elected to the Party Secretariat on October 31.

In his report to the Conference, published in heavily abridged form in the December 27 issue of Pravda, Ilyichev clearly revealed the straits to which the Party has been driven by the combination of confusion, skepticism, and apathy with which its rank-and-file and the non-Party masses have reacted to the new stage of de-Stalinization inaugurated by the "Congress of the Builders of Communism." Although the Party is armed with "the all-conquering weapon of Marxist-Leninist theory," Ilyichev warned ideological workers against adopting a defensive position. The problem confronting the Party's ideological apparatus is that of finding a way to go over to the offensive. Agit-prop's boss was unclear as to how this could be done. The substance of the task, he said, lay in "patiently and insistently explaining the Party's views on the cult of personality" and in "drawing a sharp line between the cult of personality and the entire long-term and many-sided activity of our Party."

How to proceed? First, by distinguishing between what was good and what was bad in STALIN. Second, by concentrating greater effort on the ideological education of the younger generation, which, it appears, is far more attracted to the skepticism of the "Young Prose" group (such young writers as AKSYONOV and ROZOV) than to memorizing the constantly shifting catechism of the State ideology. Third, by struggling to stamp out survivals of capitalism, nationalism, religion.

Ilyichev's prescription, so far as it is visible from the fragments of his report which appeared in Pravda, seems as inadequate a specific against the disease he diagnoses as Agit-prop's earlier, more modest, efforts at treatment, such as the authoritative Pravda article of November 21 (WEEKA No. 47 and A-374, November 24).

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On December 28, the Conference concluded its work. So far as could be seen from Soviet press accounts, little had been decided. In what was described as "a brief concluding speech," Ilyichev said only that the Conference had provided an opportunity for "a creative, businesslike exchange of opinions on the basic problems of ideological work."

The Conference thus trailed off into inconclusive generalities. If there is a Central Committee plenum early in the new year (WEEKA No. 48), it may produce a resolution on this important subject. If it is to help the Party in the task of setting skeptical Soviet minds straight, such a resolution would have to be more effective than that adopted by the Central Committee on January 9, 1960, which detailed all the shortcomings now once more belabored by Conference speakers and prescribed for their overcoming. A new ideological resolution would have to be more effective than the 1960 document because the ideological problems now facing the Party are much more serious than they were two years ago.

12. Leadership: Madam Minister Returns. Absent from public view since the Party Congress and the object of various rumors that she had become a political has-been, Yekaterina A. FURTSEVA reappeared as the Minister of Culture at a December 22 press conference, which was dominated by the composer Dmitriy SHOSTAKOVICH. Shostakovich talked about the Second International Chaikovskiy Piano Competition, scheduled for April-May 1962. Pravda gave him 8½ inches of space in its columns, adding, almost as an afterthought, "The Minister of Culture of the USSR, Ye. A. Furtseva, spoke at the press conference."

Furtseva's reappearance may not be an unmixed blessing for her Ministry, which continues to be the object of criticism. At the Kremlin Ideological Conference speakers complained that it was falling down on the job of producing scientific-popularization films and not doing enough to disseminate the best cultural achievements of individual Union Republics throughout the country. A Ministry headed by a politically insecure individual can expect more of the same.

In attempting to explain Furtseva's return, some Western observers in Moscow opine that, sensitive as it is to reports abroad of "crisis in the Kremlin", the regime has reinstalled her as part of its effort to maintain an impression of business as usual.

13. More on Armenian Repatriation. Embassy travelers who visited Yerevan in the third week of December (Embassy's A-494, December 26) were given additional details on plans for the second major wave of Armenian repatriation (WEEKA No. 51 and Embassy's A-479, December 22; Embassy's A-235, September 29, 1961).

The plan provides for the repatriation of 60,000 Armenians by the end of 1965 (a total of 100,000 Armenians returned in the first post-war repatriation, according to Yerevan sources). The 1962 target calls for the reception of an initial two to three thousand repatriates, for whom housing is now being constructed.

The numbers of repatriates who will be brought back to Armenia will depend upon the completion of apartment-housing space, so that returnees will be able to go directly from the Yerevan reception center to a waiting flat. It is thus hoped to avoid the situation which prevailed during the post-war repatriation, when

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repatriates arrived in Yerevan only to find that they had no place to live. The result was that repatriates, who had brought with them certain cash and commodity assets, set about building individual family houses, which now constitute a distinctive feature of Yerevan and in which there is a lively trade.

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14. [redacted]

For the Ambassador:

Boris H. Klosson
Counselor for Political Affairs

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